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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION: AGENDA FOR DEVELOPMENT

Renewal of the dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership

Note by the Secretary-General

1. The present note is submitted in response to General Assembly resolution 50/122 of 20 December 1995, in which the Assembly took note of the report of the Secretary-General on renewal of the dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership (A/50/480), and reaffirmed that such a dialogue should be conducted in response to the imperatives of mutual interests and benefits, genuine interdependence, shared responsibility and the partnership for achieving sustained economic growth and sustainable development as well as improving the international economic environment that is conducive to such development.

2. By the same resolution, the Assembly recognized that the discussions on an agenda for development and its outcome aimed at strengthening constructive dialogue with a view to enhancing and revitalizing international cooperation for development through increased partnership among and between countries.

3. Accordingly, the General Assembly agreed to hold a high-level dialogue for a period of two days at the fifty-first session on the theme of the social and economic impact of globalization and interdependence and their policy implications. The date, modalities and focus of the discussions were to be decided in the context of the outcome of the work of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on an Agenda for Development and the decision taken on the adoption of the agenda. The Secretary-General was requested, in close cooperation with Governments, relevant organizations and other development actors, to make initial preparations for such a dialogue.

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4. The agenda for development is yet to be finalized. The General Assembly has decided that the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group should continue its work at the fifty-first session of the Assembly.

5. Therefore, the decision on the date, modalities and focus of the discussions of the two-day high-level policy dialogue will need to be deferred pending the completion of the agenda for development. Insofar as the Assembly has indicated that the Working Group should aim at concluding its work as soon as possible, the agenda may be expected to be completed during the fifty-first session. This will, however, not leave sufficient time to prepare and hold the two-day high-level dialogue during the fifty-first session.

6. In keeping with the proposals made in 1995 by the Secretary-General, the preparations for the discussions should not only involve the United Nations and the concerned organizations of the system, but should also actively engage other actors in development, as well as the academic and scientific community. It was foreseen that the process of dialogue would involve meetings organized under the auspices of other regional and interregional organizations, the convening of forums by the non-governmental organizations community, the organization of hearings, meetings of parliamentarians, and the commissioning of studies and expert groups by universities and other academic and public purpose organizations. The high-level dialogue should thus be the culmination of a series of preparatory processes, and its outcome should provide for appropriate follow-up by the United Nations, its related institutions and other relevant regional and interregional organizations, as well as other development actors. The Secretary-General emphasized that the theme of the dialogue should be selected preferably at least a year or more in advance to allow for adequate preparations (A/50/480, para. 44).

7. In view of the above, it is recommended that the high-level dialogue be deferred until the latter part of the fifty-second session.

8. In resolution 50/122, the General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to submit further recommendations for enhancing the dialogue. Again, the Assembly foresaw that these recommendations should be identified taking into consideration, inter alia, the outcome of the work on an agenda for development. The Secretary-General will be in a position to present his recommendations at the earliest possible date following the adoption of the agenda for development.